

[Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath]

The Minister of State said that the Bill was introduced on the 25th March—it means hardly 4 days after the Rajya Sabha adjourned. That makes the confusion worse confounded. I do not know why the Government is working like this without a mind, without a rudder, without any plan or programme. It is a very sad state of affairs for the country. The Government is just drifting....

Mr. Speaker: That is enough.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: You should kindly advise the Government.

Mr. Speaker: The Prime Minister has expressed his regret. That is enough. There is nothing more than that.

12.42 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

TWENTY-FIFTH REPORT

Shri Tyagi (Dehra Dun): I beg to present the Twenty-fifth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on Appropriation Accounts (Civil), 1961-62 and Audit Report (Civil) 1963 relating to the Ministries of Finance and Steel, Mines and Heavy Engineering and the Financial Results (Civil Grants) and Grants-in-Aid.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

FIFTY-FIRST REPORT

Shri A. C. Guha (Barasat): I beg to present the Fifty-first Report of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Steel, Mines and Heavy Engineering—Heavy Engineering Corporation Limited, Ranchi.

12.43 hrs.

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DEMANDS FOR GRANTS—Contd.

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY—Contd.

Mr. Speaker: Shri V. B. Gandhi may continue his speech.

Shri V. B. Gandhi (Bombay Central South): Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday I was saying that I would like to say a few words about an industry which has the largest number of self-employed people in the country. That industry is the powerloom industry. That industry today is in a bad plight and this plight has been brought about by the imposition of new excise duty under the Budget proposals and also by the revocation of certain exemptions from duty which were enjoyed by the smaller units of the industry under certain circumstances. Before I sit down, I propose to make an earnest appeal to the Ministry to take timely and appropriate measures to save an important industry with such a large content of self-employed element.

Let us now look at the background of the subject. The powerloom industry, as we all know, is a cottage industry. The average unit of ownership consists of 2 to 4 looms. Usually, the weaver and his family all work occasionally employing outside help. Although it is a cottage industry and a small-scale industry, the aggregate size of this industry is rather larger. There are one lakh powerlooms in the country and this compares with only 2 lakhs of powerlooms in the composite mills sector. Now, this industry, as I said, is facing a crisis. And what is the reason for this situation? It is certainly not that the industry is lacking in efficiency because it is a very competitive industry and that competitiveness has been proved under severe conditions. Then, it is not that the industry is lacking in skill and experience for skill and experience in this industry is traditional because the workers and the owners of this industry are the people who were formerly